

WATT FUN COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

The trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2023.

Objectives and activities

Principal activity

The principal activity of the charity is to provide an inclusive, learning through play environment to pre-school children aged between 3 and 5.

Aims and objectives

The aim of the charity is to advance the education of young children through the provision of an appropriate, safe and satisfying programme of play and activities which meet the requirements of the Department of Education's Curriculum. This is done without distinction of age, gender, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnic identity, political or religious opinion, by associating the statutory authorities, community and voluntary organisations and the inhabitants in a common effort to advance education, and in particular:

- to advance the education of the beneficiaries by the provision of safe and satisfying group play, with the right of parents/carers to take responsibility for and to become involved in the activities of the group; and to promote the preservation of health of the beneficiaries; and
- to support the values and principles of Early Years.

How our charity benefits the public

Our activities provide benefit to the public by:

- Providing opportunity for education;
- Providing opportunity for affordable childcare;
- Providing opportunity for staff development via training and qualifications;
- Providing quality childcare in a rural environment;
- Supporting parents/guardians;
- Networking with other public benefit groups.

Achievements and performance

Charitable activities delivered and achieved by Watt Fun Playgroup for this period include:

- Provided places for 15 pre-preschool children (aged 2 years and 10 months to 3);
- Provided places for 26 preschool children (aged 3 to 5);
- Provided placement for 1 college student studying childcare;
- Promoted language development through the introduction and use of story sacks;
- Updated training in special educational needs.

Financial Review

The charity returned a deficit for the year of £3,479 (2022 – surplus of £2,169). At 31 August 2023 the total unrestricted funds of the charity amounted to £16,808 (2022 - £20,287).

Of the total funds reported above, £16,808 is made up of cash as bank. The trustees consider it prudent to hold monies in reserve in the event that unforeseen circumstances should lead to financial difficulties which might put the future of the charity in jeopardy.

WATT FUN COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Financial Review (continued)

The Playgroup receives funding from the Education Authority for each pre-school child. This money is used to pay staff wages, make a contribution to heat, light and insurance costs for the premises and the general running of the Playgroup. Funds are supplemented through fund raising events held in conjunction with parents and friends in the local area. This includes coffee mornings, a sponsored walk and quiz sheets.

Reserves policy

Charity reserves should provide the organisation with financial stability and the means for it to meet its charitable objectives for the foreseeable future. The trustees are confident that the unrestricted funds, together with expected future incomes, will be sufficient to meet the working capital requirements for the forthcoming year.

Plans for the future

The future plans for the charity are:

- To promote physical health through the use of drama and role play;
- To improve health and wellbeing for children and adults by promoting healthy foods and exercise;
- To develop staffs' confidence in the use of Makaton sign language through training;
- To continue to grow and provide places for all children under 5.

Structure, governance and management

Watt Fun Community Playgroup is a registered charity and has been in operation for over 30 years. It is a cross-community organisation and has 5 members of staff and a Parent's management committee who are responsible for making decisions about the group. Watt Fun Community Playgroup is governed by a Constitution which was adopted on 22nd September 2015. The Playgroup caters for approximately 25 children between the ages of 3 and 5 years in a preschool morning and 25 children pre-school afternoon session. We are based in Ballywatt Presbyterian Church Hall. The property is used on licence from the Ballywatt Presbyterian Church and no fee is charged but a donation is given. The Playgroup does carry its own insurance as well.

All children are welcomed at the Playgroup and children with additional needs are treated with equal concern. A SENCO (being a Special Educational Needs Coordinator) leader is in situ who coordinates the provision for children with special educational needs or disabilities in Playgroup. The Playgroup has an Additional Needs Policy in place which they adhere to and is available for inspection.

WATT FUN COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Structure, governance and management (continued)

The Playgroup was rated as outstanding in all areas by the Education Training Inspectorate in Northern Ireland in 2016. The Playgroup is inspected annually by the Northern Health & Social Care Trust via the Trust Early Years Team to ensure it maintains its standards and approximately every five years by the Department of Education.

We believe that the Playgroup is successful for many reasons and one of these is the partnership with parents and the integration of parents into life at the Playgroup. Each parent or carer is persuaded to visit the Playgroup to explain their profession or career.

We also explore and celebrate various traditional annual events in the calendar including the Chinese New Year and the North West 200 event held in the local area. This is to expand the children's learning outside the traditional and also to make them aware of the events in the local community.

The trustees who served during the year were:

Naomi Freeburn (Chair)
Gemma Cochrane
Susan McAuley
Gemma McElnay
Danielle Reed
Gemma Richmond

Appointing of trustees

The trustees are appointed annually during the Annual General Meeting which is usually held around October. Suitable candidates are considered on the basis of their skills, experience and sympathy with the aims of the charity.

Related parties and co-operation with other organisations

None of our trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between a trustee or senior manager of the charity with any related parties must be disclosed to the full board of trustees in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party.

This report was approved by the Trustees on 23 January 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



Susan McAuley
Chair